

Summary of the Friday Sermon Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad - Khalifatul Masih IV, on 26th December 1997

The month of Ramadan is that in which the Quran was sent down as guidance for mankind with manifest principles for guidance which distinguish. Therefore whosoever of you finds themselves in this month let them fast throughout. But whoso is ill or on a journey should do so on a corresponding number of other days. Allah desires ease for you and He desires not hardship for you so that you may complete the number and that you may glorify Allah for His having guided you and that you may be grateful.

So when My servants ask thee about me: I am near. I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he prays to Me. So should they respond to Me and have firm faith in Me that they may be guided aright.

The Holy Quran. al-Baqarah [The Heifer]: 186, 187.

I speak about Ramadan in the sermon preceding Ramadan. Sometimes this continues into Ramadan. These things are heard again and again and are still neglected: 'So continue to remind for reminding always helps.'¹ It carries this advice to remind repeatedly and emphatically because it profits. A large number of newcomers and even the young children are growing up. Even if you consider that you know these things rest assured that most do not and those who think they do only suspect it because when the subject begins they will learn that it has been delved into deeply.

It is translated 'The month of Ramadan is that in which the Quran was sent down' whereas Ramadan was prescribed later whilst the Quran was revealed from the first day of the Commission. So it is taken to mean that however much of the Quran had been revealed was repeated in Ramadan. Another meaning of it is that this is the month about which the Quran was revealed. This is so because the entire teaching of the Quran can be acted upon in Ramadan. This is such a grand month that it is as if the Quran was revealed about it. Then it is stated that هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ [as guidance for mankind] this month and the Quran have been sent as guidance for people and new and spacious paths of illumination بَيِّنَاتٍ أَهْدَى مَنْ [with manifest principles for guidance] are opened up to those already guided.

One meaning of مَنْ شَهَدَ الشَّهْرَ مِنْكُمْ [whosoever of you finds themselves in this month] is to observe the moon. Another is that whoever finds Ramadan understanding it in its reality and witnesses it then it is important for such to observe its fasts.

Regarding the Quranic injunction not to fast on a journey it should be made clear that if one should force oneself to fast during travel then one should remember that God cannot be forcefully pleased. Virtue in fasting is only virtue when it pleases Allah.

If you fast correctly and only for the sake of Allah then after passing through Ramadan you would have opportunity to be abundantly grateful to Allah. For some it is because Ramadan was difficult for them but God made it easy and enabled them to keep the fasts. For others it is because Ramadan provided them with ample guidance.

¹ *The Holy Quran.* al-Ala [The Highest]: 10.

The greatest fruit and the highest goal of Ramadan finding Allah 'So when My servants ask thee about me: I am near.' This reveals that the Godly never ask for worldly things but 'O Messenger! They ask you about Me'. It speaks of the sincerity intended by the questioner. In this case Almighty God Himself calls out 'I am near' without any intermediary.

Certain *Ahadith* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ shed light upon some of the meanings of these noble verses which mention the prominence of fasting in the holy month of Ramadan 'Ramadan is a shield and an impregnable fort':²

'Ali narrated that the Messenger of Allah said 'Indeed in Paradise there are chambers, whose outside can be seen from their inside, and their inside can be seen from their outside.' A Bedouin stood and asked 'Who are they for, O Messenger of Allah? He replied 'For those who speak well, feed others, fast regularly, and praise Allah in the night while people sleep.'³

Generally one wishes to enclose their home but the theme of this *Hadith* is strange. It mentions aspects of one's piety that are open to humanity at large. But if one rises in the night when others are asleep it is not known to anyone. It is the glory of Allah, that in Paradise as well God would show their inner virtues which they hid from the world to all and sundry.

Similarly there is the *Hadith* 'Fast and you will be healthy'.⁴ Not only does this *Hadith* point to physical health but also to the many ills that afflict one. When you fast many of your ills would be shed and your spiritual body would also be healthy.

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² Ibn Hanbal, Abu Abdullah Ahmad ibn Muhammad. *Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal*.

³ Tirmidhi. Abu Isa Muhammad ibn Isa. *Jami al-Tirmidhi*.

⁴ Hamadani, Abu Shuja Shiruya ibn Shahrdar Daylami. *Firdaws al-Akhbar*.